Application Serial No. 09/989,714   Attorney Docket No. 82937
In reply to Office Action of 30 September 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-3 (canceled).

4.   (previously presented) A method providing a stand-alone testing environment for a test object functional element of a computer system, said test object functional element having a plurality of interfaces for coupling with other elements of said computer system, said interfaces being of a type which provide communication between functional elements and which employ a predetermined interface protocol for inter-processing communication whose mode of operation involves a shared memory such that information communicated through said interfaces is passed between said functional elements by a process of notifying the addressed functional element that information is ready and providing the addressed functional element with its location in said shared memory, wherein said predetermined interface protocol is further of a type in which the location of information is distributed among a set of at least two hierarchical levels of a database formed in association with said shared memory, said hierarchical levels being organized by degree of generality of functional interface task information to be stored therein, said method comprising:

         providing a computerized dialog to enable a user to create an input data file for said test object functional

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element in a form for subsequently being stored in an

identifiable location in said shared memory;

prompting a user for at least one functional element

interface task which has been previously developed

utilizing said stand alone testing environment and

which is of form compliant with said predetermined

interface protocol and which is stored with its

identifiable location in said shared memory;

starting said at least one functional element interface

task utilizing said computer dialog created input data

file;

monitoring said plurality of interfaces; and

creating a test case generation file by providing the user

with a corresponding set of task creation options

related to said at least one functional element

interface task individually operative with a degree of

generality of functional task information that is to

be stored in a corresponding individual level of said

set of at least two hierarchical levels of said

database..

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5.   (previously presented) The method of claim 4 further

comprising storing a unique interface file corresponding to each

functional element interface task selected by a user in response

to said prompting.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 5 further

comprising storing said user created input data file in a user

defined functional element interface task file such that said

user created file may be viewed and edited outside of said stand

alone testing environment.

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) The method of claim [[7]] <u>11</u> wherein said

step of creating a test generation file further comprises

selecting test initiation features.

9. (canceled).

10. (canceled).

11. (currently amended) ~~The~~ <u>A</u> method ~~of claim 7~~ <u>for testing a</u>

<u>test object functional element of a computer system with a</u>

stand-alone functional element test tool, said test object

functional element having at least one interface for

communicating with other functional elements of said computer

system, said at least one interface having a predetermined

interface protocol for inter-processing communication, wherein

said predetermined interface protocol for inter-processing

communication employs a mode of operation involving a memory

shared among said test object and said other functional elements

and in which information to be communicated through the

interface is passed between functional elements by a process of

notifying an addressed functional element that data is ready and

providing the addressed functional element with a corresponding

location in said shared memory, said interface protocol further

being of a type in which a location of information is

distributed among a set of at least two hierarchical levels of a

database formed in association with said shared memory, said

hierarchical levels being organized by degree of generality of

functional interface task information, ~~and the~~ said method

~~further comprises~~ comprising:

creating an input data file for said test object functional

element by prompting a user for data format and

content compatible with said predetermined interface

protocol;

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storing said input data file;

creating a test generation file by providing said user with
  a plurality of task creation options whereby selected

  task creation options are input into said test

  generation file which is written in a predetermined

  high level interface programmers' language adapted for

  compilation into computer code executable statements

  compatible with said predetermined protocol;

said step of providing the user with a plurality of task

  options including providing at least one corresponding

  set of options individually operative with a

  corresponding individual level of said set of at least

  two hierarchical levels of said database[[.]];

compiling said test generation file and said input data

  file to produce a test case executable file in a

  preferred programming language based on said selected

  task creation options;

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<u>initiating a test utilizing said test case executable file</u>

<u>and said input data file for testing said test object</u>

<u>functional element and said at least one interface by</u>

<u>monitoring a status of said test; and</u>

<u>storing test result data related to said test.</u>

12. (original) The method of claim 11 further comprising

displaying said input data to a user on a file viewer.

13. (currently amended) The method of claim [[7]] <u>11</u> further

comprising comparing said test result data with expected results

from said test object functional element utilizing said input

data file.

14. (canceled).

15. (currently amended) The system of claim [[14]] <u>19</u> wherein:

said input data structure is utilized to prompt a user for

test case data being in a form cooperatively

associated with said predetermined interface